

UDOT Environmental Experience Capture & Transfer

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Introduction

The purpose of this newsletter is to capture the lessons learned from specific projects and transfer that knowledge to the teams leading present and future projects.

This newsletter will be published on a monthly basis, will be e-mailed to all those who express interest, and will also be available for download via the UDOT web site. Information will be presented by UDOT Environmental Services and include comments received by local, resource center, and legal staff of FHWA. Every attempt will be made to ensure that the comments are placed in the appropriate context. If anything you read is unclear, please contact Reed Soper at 965-4159 or rsoper@utah.gov.

Environmental Document Quality

A Quality Improvement Team (QIT) tasked with improving Environmental document quality was formed in January 2004. This team consisted of UDOT central and regional environmental staff, FHWA environmental staff, and several consultants. The team has examined several aspects of document quality improvement including: enhanced training and certification, more detailed QC/QA procedures, identification of key milestones and concurrence points, and explanations of roles and responsibilities. The team's high priority items have been completed. They include:

- An Environmental Chapter of a Local Government Manual of Instruction,
- A Comment/Response Template,
- EA and EIS Schedule Templates,
- Guidance on Milestone Checks,
- A Roles and Responsibilities Chart,
- A Process outline for document development and review,
- Definition of UDOT Environmental Lead's roles and responsibilities, and
- An Environmental Document close-out form

By September 7, 2004, these items will be downloadable on the UDOT website and available for your use. The QIT will continue to pursue additional solutions to the environmental document quality challenge.

Air Quality Update

While commenting on a recent Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), the EPA requested that Air Quality analysis be enhanced. The EPA did recognize that thorough evaluations of Carbon Monoxide are included in documents but stressed that documents also include a disclosure of the relative impacts of the project alternatives for PM10, VOCs, NOX, and mobile source air toxins. They also requested that a project's potential impact on ozone levels should be discussed. Finally, the EPA suggests that CAL3QHC can be used for PM10 in comparing alternatives and assessing potential impacts. UDOT and FHWA will determine how to best address EPA's suggestions in the coming weeks and that guidance will be provided in a future newsletter

Readership survey

As part of our effort to serve you better, I am interested in knowing the readership of this newsletter. Please send me an e-mail at rsoper@utah.gov indicating that you are a reader.

Upcoming Events

September 14-16 NTI Workshop on Linking Planning and Environment (UDOT by invitation only)

October 25-27 – UDOT Engineering Conference. On-line registration is available. Environmental Break-out sessions include:

- Environmental Document Quality Improvement
- EA Guidance
- Fitting Transportation into the Natural Environment
- Community Impact Assessment
- Avoiding Muddy Waters